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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 23 December 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, and further to our frequent earlier letters concerning Israel's attacks on Lebanon, I have the honour to inform you of the incidence of another bloody attack committed by Israel against Lebanese civilians in a region which is at a distance of scores of kilometres from its borders and the regions it occupies.

At 1440 hours on 22 December 1998 Israeli military aircraft fired missiles on the area around the village of Janta, to the east of Baalbek, targeting the house of Lebanese national Muhammad Uthman. The house was destroyed and his wife and six of his children were killed and burnt beyond recognition.

This fresh carnage is yet another in the series of massacres perpetrated by Israel, which include those committed at Qana (18 April 1996), Nabatiyah (18 April 1996), Mansuri (14 April 1996) and Suhmur (12 April 1996), all of which created a furore in the media at the time. On this occasion, Israeli officials have yet again announced that the crime was committed unintentionally. However, it is in fact the tragic outcome of the policy of aggression and terrorism that Israel has pursued against Lebanon and its citizens for many years.

The apology offered by Israel on this occasion, like those which preceded it on other occasions, is rejected. It will not bring the dead back to life or restore to their loved ones those who were murdered. We present these tragic facts to the international community, as represented by the Security Council, in the enduring hope that it will take measures to repel the aggressor and halt the ongoing Israeli attacks that pose a threat to peace and security in the region and in the world.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council and of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Samir MOUBARAK
Ambassador
Permanent Representative